

# SPIDER-MAN<sup>®</sup> UNMASKED

**MARVEL**  
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**BACK  
IN  
BLACK**  
02.2007

## *The Sensational* **SPIDER-MAN**



**RATED A**



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DIRECT EDITION



THE MOTEL WHERE PETER PARKER AND HIS FAMILY HAVE BEEN STAYING INCOGNITO.



THE PARKING LOT BEHIND IT.



WHERE A STRANGE TRIO HAS ASSEMBLED...



MAY PARKER IS THINKING: "SHE'S A THIEF AND A BOUNTY HUNTER. BAD LUCK FOLLOWS HER AROUND LIKE A DOG. WHENEVER THIS WOMAN TRIES TO DO SOMETHING GOOD, IT SOURS."



MARY JANE IS REMEMBERING A LINE FROM THE PLAY SHE'D BEEN REHEARSING: "WHEN SHALL WE THREE MEET AGAIN? IN THUNDER, LIGHTNING, OR IN RAIN?"



FELICIA HARDY (A.K.A. THE BLACK CAT) JUST WANTS TO KNOW:

HOW'S SPIDER?



FINE, THANK YOU FOR ASKING. WE--HIS FAMILY--TOOK CARE OF HIM.

DID YOU... SEE HIM ON THE NEWS?

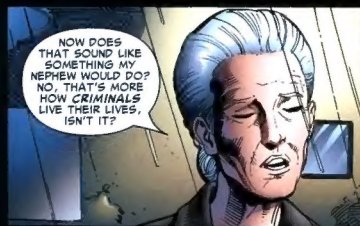
YOU BET I DID, COPPER TOP. I SAW THE RHINO PULPING HIM LIKE AN ORANGE. WHERE IS HE? INSIDE THE ROOM?



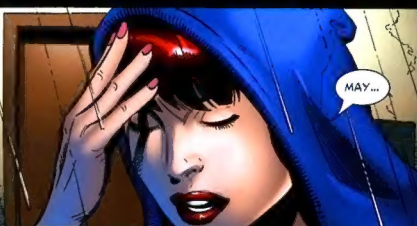
NO, HE'S OUT, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE, BUT IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE--

MAY--

HE GO AFTER THE RHINO? LOOKING FOR A LITTLE PAYBACK?



NOW DOES THAT SOUND LIKE SOMETHING MY NEPHEW WOULD DO? NO, THAT'S MORE HOW CRIMINALS LIVE THEIR LIVES, ISN'T IT?



MAY...



... YOU'RE THINKING OF ONE OF MY OTHER LIVES, MRS. PARKER. REMEMBER, I HAVE NINE.



ANYWAY, I'M PRETTY SURE PETER'S GOT BIGGER FISH TO FRY THAN THE RHINO... I'M PRETTY SURE PAYBACK'S NOT HIGH ON HIS PRIORITY LIST RIGHT NOW.



--if that makes  
you feel **BETTER**  
about yourselves.

Which God  
knows I'M all  
about.

Making myself feel  
**BETTER**, I mean.

Hence,  
**THIS** baby.

# NOTHING CAN STOP THE RHINO

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I wondered about calling it my "Black Cat Cycle"...



...but then I thought: "Naaaaah..."



Because, truthfully, what kind of **GROWN WOMAN** gives inanimate objects **PET NAMES?**

FIREHEART? YOU THERE?



ACTUALLY, I WAS ABOUT TO PAGE YOU...

The Puma and I have fallen into a "special relationship." (He's my **MISTER RIGHT NOW**, as they say.) The cycle and helmet were **TOKENS** of his affection.



OH? YOU HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR ME?

YOU'LL THINK SO.

THAT... **IMMOVABLE OBJECT** YOU WANTED ME TO FIND?



"WELL, I'VE HAD A FRUITFUL NIGHT."

"TELL ME--"

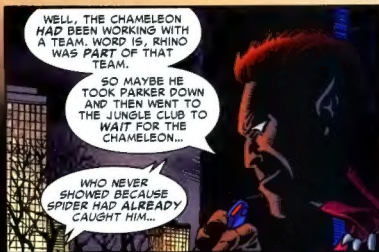
"MY FIRST STOP WAS THE JUNGLE CLUB, WHICH--ACCORDING TO MY CONTACTS--HAD BEEN APPROPRIATED BY DMITRI SMERDYAKOV."



THE CHAMELEON?

WHY?

EXACTLY, BUT THE PLACE WAS TRASHED-- AND WITH SMERDYAKOV IN JAIL, I'M THINKING OUR BIG GRAY GUY DID IT.



WELL, THE CHAMELEON HAD BEEN WORKING WITH A TEAM. WORD IS, RHINO WAS PART OF THAT TEAM.

SO MAYBE HE TOOK PARKER DOWN AND THEN WENT TO THE JUNGLE CLUB TO WAIT FOR THE CHAMELEON...

WHO NEVER SHOWED BECAUSE SPIDER HAD ALREADY CAUGHT HIM...



"EXACTLY, CAT. WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN THE BENDER RHINO'S ON, LEAVING A TRAIL A SIX-YEAR-OLD COULD FOLLOW..."

"KNOCKING OVER A WASHINGTON MUTUAL ON WEST BROADWAY..."



"A LIQUOR STORE ON 7TH AVENUE..."

"WHAT? WHY?"

Sorry We're  
CLOSED



TO BLOW OFF SOME STEAM? TO FORGET WHAT A LOSER HE IS?

HE'S HIRED MUSCLE, CAT. NOT HANNIBAL LECTER.

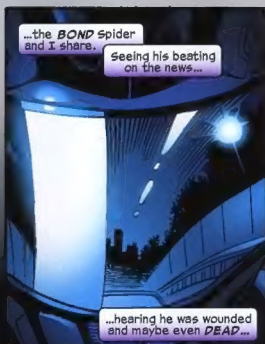
YOU WANT A REASON? FILL IN THE BLANK...





...  
Add Puma to the list of  
people who think I'm  
crazy, after Red and May.

That's fine; they don't  
understand...they've  
**NEVER** understood...



...the **BOND** Spider  
and I share.

Seeing his beating  
on the news...

...hearing he was wounded  
and maybe even **DEAD**...



...It all came  
**FLOODING** back.

The fight with  
Octopus in the  
Owl's **AVIARY**...



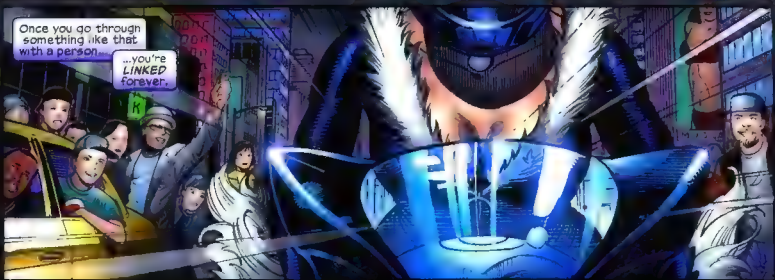
...Spider's  
fury...



...and Octopus  
lashing out at me.

(With those  
**DAMN** tentacles  
of his.)





Once you go through something like that with a person...

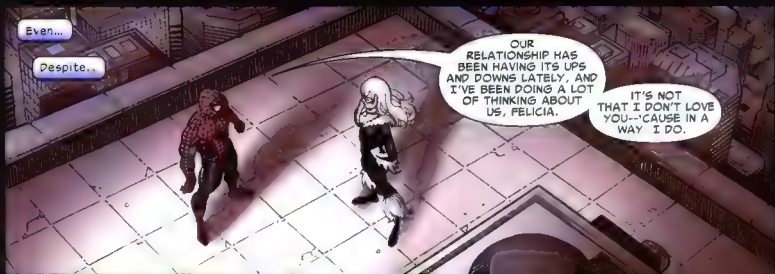
...you're LINKED forever.

Even...

Despite...

OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN HAVING ITS UPS AND DOWNS LATELY, AND I'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF THINKING ABOUT US, FELICIA.

IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LOVE YOU---CAUSE IN A WAY I DO.



Imagine my surprise. For once, I was on the receiving end of the "It's Not You, It's Me" speech.

Which took an unexpected turn, I admit, with...



AND THERE'S ANOTHER THING. FOR YOU, YOUR COSTUMED IDENTITY SEEMS TO BE EVERYTHING! FOR YOU, THERE IS NO FELICIA HARDY! ONLY THE BLACK CAT!

YOU WANT IT TO BE THE SAME WAY FOR ME. WANT ME TO BE SPIDER-MAN ALL THE TIME?



BUT THAT'S NOT THE REAL ME! THE REAL ME IS PETER PARKER, NOT SOME SUPER POWERS; NOT A COSTUME; BUT A REAL PERSON.

I'M SORRY, CAT, BUT I THINK IT'S BEST THAT WE BREAK-UP!

FINE WITH ME, MISTER PARKER!



Of course, now that he's revealed his alter ego, there's *LESS* Spider and more Peter than ever. (Which must THRILL Mrs. Watson-Parker to no end.)

CYCLE,  
LOCK-  
DOWN.

**BEEP  
BEEP**

FUNNY how  
that worked out  
for them...

And I wonder if Spider even gave it a second thought...

PUMA? I'M  
HERE. GIVE ME A  
LOCATION--

...what his  
**WORDS**  
did to me.

Hurt me more than any punch,  
any clawing, **ANY ANYTHING**  
ever had. Left me wondering:

And.

MY GOD,  
WHAT HAVE I DONE  
TO MY BODY? WHAT  
DID I LET THE KINGPIN  
DO TO MY BODY?

I was so worried I'd be a  
liability to Spider, so  
worried he wouldn't love me  
because I didn't have any  
powers...I let Fisk graft a  
"bad luck aura" onto me,  
like some mad scientist.

How **PATHETIC**  
was that? How  
**NEEDY?**



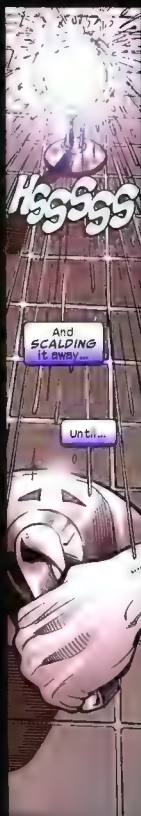
I HATED myself  
so much in that  
moment. I...



...I wanted to rip EVERY  
stitch of the costume--  
of the CAT--off of me.



Like peeling away  
a layer of skin...



Hggggg

And  
SCALDING  
it away...

Until...



...there wasn't  
anything--

--anyone--

--left.

"CAT?  
"LICIA?"

YOU MIGHT WANT TO SHAKE IT A LITTLE FASTER, PUSSYCAT.

I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PARK, NEAR THE EAGLE MONUMENT, AND OPERATION RHINO'S ABOUT TO GET MESSY...

HOW SO?

SOME RUDE SAILORS ARE TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH SYTSEVICH. IT LOOKS LIKE...

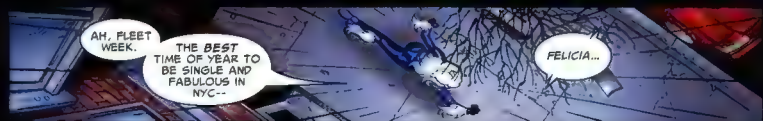
THE PIOTS.



AH, FLEET WEEK.

THE BEST TIME OF YEAR TO BE SINGLE AND FABULOUS IN NYC--

FELICIA...



...I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT PERVERSE FANTASY IS RUNNING THROUGH YOUR HEAD RIGHT NOW, BUT THERE WON'T BE MUCH LEFT OF THE NEWBIES IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING SOON.

UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO--

NEGATIVE, PUMA! YOU'RE BACKUP, DON'T FORGET.



SIT TIGHT, UNLESS THEY'RE IN IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL DANGER.

OTHERWISE...





**RAARRGGHH!!**





AGGRESSION  
MANAGEMENT.

LOOK  
INTO IT!!



HHHN.

**SCRAACK!**



GENTLEMEN, NO  
ONE APPRECIATES A  
GOOD TIME MORE THAN  
ME, BUT THIS *ISN'T* IT.  
GO TO YOUR SHIP. GO TO  
THE HUSTLER CLUB. HELL,  
GO TO A BROADWAY  
SHOW. BUT JUST--

--GO!!!



TRUST ME,  
YOU'RE SO OUT-  
GUNNED HERE, IT'S  
PATHETIC.

FUNNY...



...I WAS  
GONNA SAY  
THE SAME THING  
ABOUT YOU.

COME ON,  
SULLIVAN, IT'S  
NOT WORTH  
IT--

NUTS,  
THESE FREAKS  
ARE ALL--  
--BUT I CAN  
TAKE 'EM! I CAN  
TAKE THESE  
FREAKS!

SHUT THE  
--BLEEP-- UP, MAN,  
WE'RE GETTING THE  
--BLEEP-- OUTTA  
HERE--

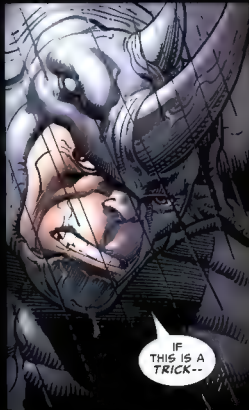
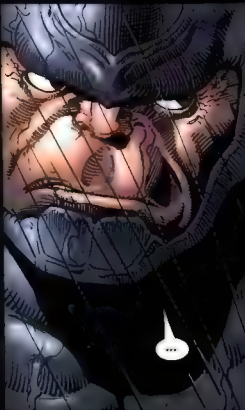


Good boys.  
Let the grown-  
ups play.

ALEKSEI--



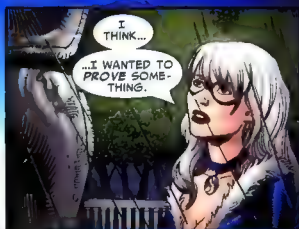
--CAN WE  
TALK?





I'M NOT  
BUT...

...TAKE ME  
DOWN WHY? SPIDER-  
MAN WAS JUST A JOB,  
CAT, AND IT'S NOT LIKE  
I KILLED HIM. (AND I  
COULDA... BELIEVE ME,  
I COULDA...)



I  
THINK...

...I WANTED TO  
PROVE SOME-  
THING.



...TO  
PARKER?



(Lord, girl, are you  
ACTUALLY having a  
heart-to-heart with  
the freaking RHINO?)

...  
...TO  
SPIDER,  
YEAH.



HOW  
COME?

YOU GUYS  
GOT A THING  
ON THE SIDE,  
OR WHAT?

NO.  
NOT FOR...

NOT FOR  
YEARS.

(But what do  
they say about  
old habits...?)



THING IS,  
SYTSEVICH.

FOR AS  
LONG AS  
I'VE KNOWN  
SPIDER--

--SORRY,  
PETER--

--SO MUCH OF  
WHAT I'VE DONE  
HAS BEEN FOR HIM.  
TO GET HIM TO...

(Love me again?  
Respect me?  
TOLERATE me?)



AND PETER...  
BOND OR NO BOND...  
DOESN'T DO THE SAME  
FOR ME. HE HAS OTHER  
CONCERNS--OTHER PEOPLE--  
IN HIS LIFE THAT TAKE  
PRECEDENCE OVER ME.  
I HAVE TO ACCEPT  
THAT.



SO...WE  
GONNA FIGHT  
OR WHAT?

NOT IF YOU  
TELL ME YOUR  
RAMPAGE ENDS  
RIGHT HERE,  
RIGHT NOW.



...  
AND IF I  
DONT?

IF YOU  
DONT...



...THEN MY  
BACKUP, THE PUMA,  
WHO'S GOT YOU IN HIS  
SIGHTS, TAKES YOU OUT  
WITH A REED RICHARDS-  
DESIGNED BAZOOKA  
THAT'LL KNOCK YOU  
OUT OF YOUR HIDE

THE HELL  
IS SHE TALKING  
ABOUT??

BUT LISTEN TO WHAT I'M  
SAYING: THE SAME WAY I  
DONT HAVE TO BE SOME  
IRRATIONAL, SEX-DRIVEN,  
COMPLETELY IDIOTIC  
LACKEY...

...YOU DONT  
HAVE TO BE SOME EASILY  
MANIPULATED, LUMBERING,  
COMPLETELY IDIOTIC  
LACKEY.



...  
GO HOME,  
ALEKSEI, WHEREVER  
HOME IS. SLEEP IT OFF.  
FORGET THE MONEY  
CHAMELEON OWES YOU.  
START AGAIN AND THIS  
TIME...START  
SMARTER.

(That goes for  
you, too, girl.)







WAIT,  
FELICIA--  
--DID YOU  
WANT ME TO  
GIVE PETER A  
MESSAGE?

A  
MESSAGE...?



"You don't know  
what you're missing."

"We could've  
had it all."

"Would anyone else  
do for you what I've  
done for you?"



...NO, NO  
MESSAGE.



Except,  
perhaps...

...thank you,  
Spider--Peter--  
whatever you  
want to call  
yourself.



For taking your  
mask off and  
**REMINING** me...

...it's **NEVER**  
too late to  
figure out who  
you really are.

END

# KRYPTONIA

CLASH OF THE TITANS



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